

City of Corvallis Community Development Department



ANNUAL REPORT FY 2014-2015

Message from the Director

Greetings,

We are pleased to provide this report to you about the activities of the Corvallis Community Development Department during FY 2014 -15. You will find information about the variety of accomplishments, projects and ongoing efforts of Community Development staff in the areas of community planning, construction permitting and inspection, code compliance and affordable housing programs. Much of this work is done with the support of other City departments, local agencies and citizen volunteers. We thank you for your guidance and assistance.

Please take a look at the article profiling the recently completed Julian Hotel project. It involved staff from our Planning, Housing and Neighborhood Services and Development Services divisions along with several other partner agencies. The project represents what Community Development does best, that is, taking a team approach to seeing a project through from start to finish; solving challenges along the way. In this case, the “finish” is 35 newly renovated and affordable apartments for low income residents in a historic building in downtown Corvallis.

I would like to touch on a couple of other areas that highlight recent efforts of the Community Development Department:

The three year City/OSU Collaboration project wrapped up in 2014 on time and under budget. Action has been taken by the City and OSU on nearly all of the 68 recommendations with many items fully completed. During 2014, Community Development staff shepherded 38 recommendations through to implementation including two Land Development Code amendment packages that addressed neighborhood planning recommendations.

Ongoing technology investments such as electronic paperless plan review, online permitting and mobile field inspections with iPads, continue to provide accessibility and efficiencies for customers, community members and staff. For example, in 2014, 52% of plumbing, electrical, or mechanical permits were obtained online saving hundreds of customer trips to City Hall.

Under the Community Development’s reorganized code compliance program, the Development Services Division retains responsibility for building code related and commercial related compliance cases; the newly-retooled Housing and Neighborhood Services Division now focuses on neighborhood oriented code compliance typically related to residential areas. This strategy is paying dividends relative to the ability to respond to code compliance cases with limited staffing.

Thank you for taking time to read this report. If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to call **(541) 766-6981** or e-mail **communitydevelopment@corvallisoregon.gov**.

Sincerely,

Ken Gibb

Community Development Director

Julian Hotel Apartments



Community Development— A Team Approach to Service

Over the past 18 months a unique project touched by all three of the Department’s operating divisions – Planning, Development Services and Housing and Neighborhood Services – unfolded in downtown Corvallis. The Julian Hotel Apartments have for many years offered 35 units of subsidized affordable housing for low income residents. The Julian also contains commercial retail spaces on its ground floor. As the building’s long-term commitment to affordability became increasingly more uncertain in recent years, two non-profits that are committed to affordable housing worked together in 2014 and 2015 to acquire the property, and then carry out a comprehensive rehabilitation project.

The building is currently owned by local non-profit affordable housing developer/owner Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services which, working with Northwest Housing Alternatives of Portland, put together a project team and financing to carry out the building’s extensive interior and exterior rehabilitation work. This is where Community Development’s involvement began. Through the Housing and Neighborhood Services Division, and utilizing funding provided through the City’s federal Community Development Block Grant and HOME Investment Partnerships programs, the City was able to commit \$695,000 toward the project to help cover costs of rehabilitation and in turn, help secure a long-term commitment to affordability.

But before any of the extensive rehabilitation work could begin, assistance from both of the Department’s other divisions was needed. Once the project’s architectural plans were complete, the Planning Division and the City’s Historic Resources Commission reviewed and approved the proposed alterations to the building’s exterior, considering historic impacts and compatibility. With those approvals in hand, construction plans were

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2014 Overview

It has been an exceptionally busy year for the staff of Development Services (DS). Construction activity reached \$203 Million in project value which is the highest value in 20+ years.

The number of commercial and residential plan reviews reached a 10-year high of 950, the bulk of which came from the commercial sector. Our combined success rate in hitting the established plan review turn-around target of 90%, was actually 94% of plan reviews completed on or ahead of time. Over 240 (26%) of these were completed the same day, or within 24 hours.

Building safety inspection totals reached 14,956, which is over 1,500 more than in 2013, and we continue to maintain same day inspection service if a request is received by 7:00 am.

In mid-2014 several major shifts occurred with DS Code Compliance, to reset and restructure the program by instituting a new approach that focuses on four areas: work without permits, illegal occupancy, dangerous buildings, and land use compliance for projects. With feedback from stakeholders and others over 5 meetings, this program reset included the development of a code compliance guide and progressive civil penalty process, along with a shift in staffing and overall approach to gaining compliance. The new guide and program summary are posted online through the Code Compliance button at www.CorvallisPermits.com.

Change is often not easy. We are pleased to report that through the multi-year effort of streamlining process and implementing online services, DS has managed to absorb the increase in workload this year and provide better enhanced services, all without hiring additional staffing or increasing permit fees in 2014.

It is our sincere pleasure to provide this report and be of service to community members.

eServices

Development Services has been implementing several technology initiatives to provide better access to project information and improve the timeliness and predictability of the approval process. Our goal is to be a partner in the success of your project. These initiatives include:

- **www.CorvallisPermits.com** – The Development Services website was completely updated in the Fall of 2014 providing many new and improved tools for customers. Check it out!
- **ePlans Pilot** – Providing paperless electronic plan review. Conducted 15 new home reviews and 2 large commercial plan reviews, all online. The pilot will end in late 2015 when this option will expand and likely be available for all projects.
- **ePay** – Providing ability to apply and pay for a variety of permits remotely online.

- **iPad Inspector App** – Providing Building Safety Inspectors instant access via the iPad to building codes, permit history, mapped routing, electronic plans, and email. The iPad has become the Inspector tool of choice in delivering exceptional, timely, and accurate service.

- **www.Corvallis.Buildingeye.com** – Provides a free subscription-based map viewer to receive emailed notice of permit activity in your neighborhood. Sign up to see what construction projects your neighbors are proposing.



Foundation Inspection



CUSTOMER TESTIMONIALS:

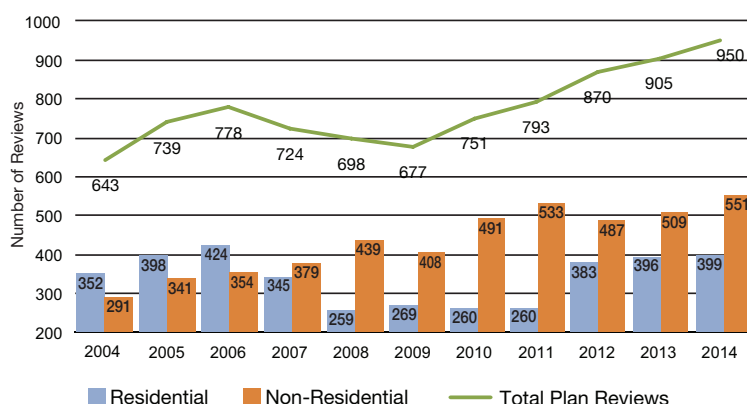
Relating to emailed inspection results:

Customers appreciate the improvements made. Recently Marnie from Hendrix Heating received instant email notice of approval once her inspection was completed and stated,
"This is great—I wish more jurisdictions had this technology! Instant results, print and add to the file while it is still on my desk. A huge time saver for me!"

Relating to ePermits online:

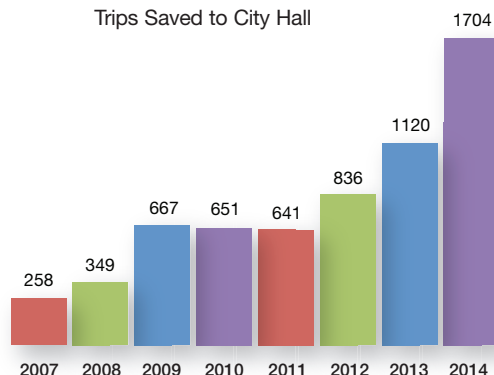
Mike from M&W Electric stated,
"We want to do things efficiently and the new options for licensed contractors to get ePermits save us a lot of time when we can go online and get our permits anytime 24/7".

Number of Residential vs Non-Residential Plan Reviews (Remodels, Additions, New Buildings)



Sustainability

Number of Oline Permits Issued and Trips Saved to City Hall



FACTOIDS

- The average person spends around 80% of their time in buildings
- Safe buildings bring peace of mind
- Number of Building Safety Inspections in 2014 = 14,956
- Number of Plan Reviews in 2014 = 950
- In 2014 contractors obtained 1704 permits online saving this many trips to City Hall
- In 2014 52% of plumbing, electrical, or mechanical permits were obtained online by licensed contractors

Land Development Code Amendments

Improve Compatibility of New Development, Facilitate Historic Preservation Reviews, and Promote Economic Development Goals

In 2014 the Planning Commission and City Council reviewed and approved a series of amendments to the Land Development Code. Many of the approved changes were based on recommendations from the Corvallis – Oregon State University Collaboration’s Neighborhood Planning Work Group. One package of amendments was adopted in August of 2014 and included several revisions recommended separately by the Historic Resources Commission, Economic Development Commission, and Neighborhood Planning Work Group. These code amendments were designed to improve the compatibility of new development, facilitate historic preservation permit reviews, and promote economic development goals.

In December of 2014, a second package of Land Development Code Amendments was adopted. The amendments consisted of a number of components, including: **1)** implementing design standards for residential development that improve the compatibility of new development, including a limitation on the scale of new development in proportion to lot size, which is applicable in the University Neighborhoods Overlay (UNO) Zone; **2)** creation of the UNO Zone; **3)** adoption of a more easily understandable methodology for the determination of residential density; and **4)** changes to public improvement standards required in conjunction with new development and other Land Development Code standards. Some of the adopted design standards apply City-wide, while others are applicable only within the UNO Zone (see below).

As part of the development of the Package #2 amendments, a five-member Technical Assistance Team (TAT) was formed to develop design standards intended to enhance the compatibility of infill development in Corvallis, based on recommendations from the Collaboration Corvallis Neighborhood Planning Work Group (NPWG). The TAT included representatives from the NPWG and the Planning Commission, as well as neighborhood representatives, a local developer, and local architects. Over the course of several meetings held between April and August 2014, the TAT provided guidance regarding the proposed text amendments, which were refined with additional input from planning and architectural consultants hired by the City.



Community Development— A Team Approach to Service

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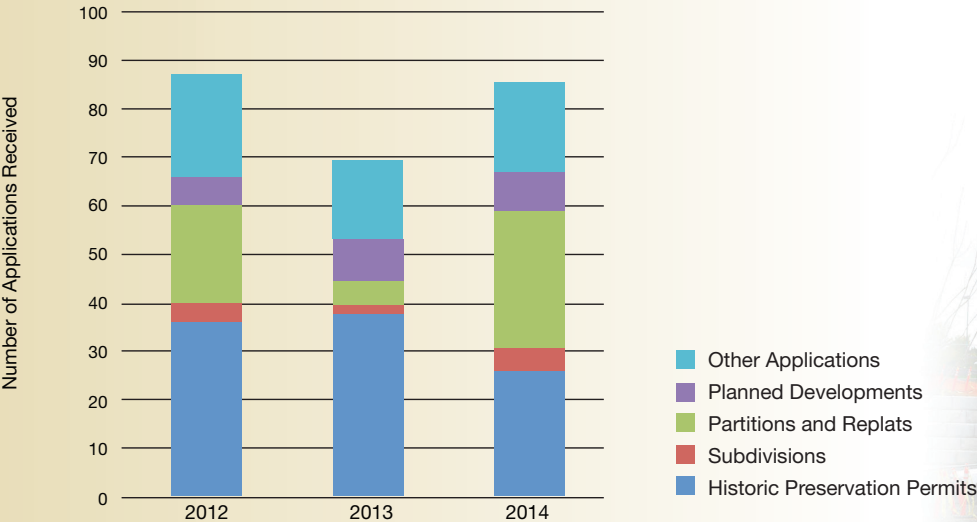
routed to Development Services for building permit reviews of the structural, mechanical, electrical and plumbing elements of the project. Not surprisingly, a structure the age of the Julian (it was constructed in 1893!) presents many challenges from a rehabilitation standpoint, but by mid-2014 construction plan reviews were complete, permits issued and construction was underway.

As with any remodel there were unforeseen circumstances which provided opportunities to improve the structure as Development Services staff worked closely with the design and construction team. For example, all floors, ceilings, and parapets were reattached to the exterior walls with stronger connections once the structure was opened up. Point loads and bearing systems were evaluated and shored up where needed. The exit system and alarm system were modernized, making it much safer for occupants. The center courtyard was completely rebuilt to improve the functionality and livability of the historic structure. In all, Development Services completed 94 building safety inspections which passed initial inspection 90% of the time.

Fast forward to today: the Hotel Julian Apartments have been returned to their original beauty both inside and out. Residents enjoy their fully-renovated apartments, the retail spaces have been improved, and a strong sense of community among the building’s residents has been achieved. Our thanks to Northwest Housing Alternatives and to the City’s affordable housing partner, Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services, for their commitment to affordable housing and for their skill, effort and perseverance in bringing this project to completion



Number of Land Use Applications Received
(by Fiscal Year)



GSMRC Cancer Center



Community Partner Spotlight: Jackson Street Youth Shelter

Since the mid-1990s the City of Corvallis, through what is today its Housing and Neighborhood Services Division, has been a partner and funder of the Jackson Street Youth Shelter (JSYS), the community’s provider of shelter and critical services to homeless and runaway youth. The relationship began when JSYS needed to rehabilitate what at the time was a leased shelter facility at 555 NW Jackson, and asked the City for financial assistance. In 2000, soon after the facility was upgraded to improve its suitability as a youth shelter, the City began to receive Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and in turn provided operating funding support during JYSY’s early years when the shelter was still refining its operating and fundraising strategies.



In the early 2000s operations continued to expand, and Jackson Street looked to shift from being a tenant to owning its own facility. Using funds raised for facility acquisition along with a \$75,000 City CDBG grant, the agency purchased the facility at 555 NW Jackson in 2007 and began to broaden its services reach. As state and federal agencies began to recognize and prioritize the growing problem of youth homelessness, funding for JSYS current services, and for new services, offered new opportunities for expansion.

In recent years, with a focus on older youth who were aging out of the shelter facility but were not yet ready to move to complete independence, JSYS implemented its Transitional Living Program. In planning for this program, JSYS identified very early that the key to its success would be to acquire a small transitional, supportive housing facility separate from the JSYS shelter, but connected to its services and staff. In 2014 to achieve this outcome, JSYS looked again to the City of Corvallis for CDBG funding, and with a strong application and services of clear value to the community was successful in securing a \$75,000 award. With additional funding from foundations and local supporters, JSYS recently acquired a three bedroom Transitional Living Program facility, and expects to serve ten to twenty youth per year.

Jackson Street Executive Director Ann Craig, acknowledging the City’s support and partnership for her agency’s latest accomplishment, notes “This meaningful support from the City has made it possible for us to reach our long-time goal of filling a gap in services for homeless transition-age youth.” The City of Corvallis and those who live here are fortunate to have the Jackson Street Youth Shelter among our homeless service providers. We thank Ann, her board, and her caring staff for doing the hard but critical work of serving the shelter and service needs of our community’s homeless youth.

New Housing and Neighborhood Services Division



Although the majority of the work of the City/OSU Collaboration Project came to a close at the end of 2013, many of the recommendations resulting from that effort are still early in their initiation. One outcome of the process, intended to focus on two key Collaboration priorities (addressing code enforcement issues and rental housing conditions) was furthered early in the City’s FY 14-15 through a department reorganization that added responsibilities to what was the Housing Division, and has now become the Housing and Neighborhood Services Division. Added to the Division’s responsibilities are more extensive outreach and education for landlords, tenants and neighborhoods, and an expanded code compliance function focused on the livability of the City’s residential areas. Efforts to improve rental conditions and neighborhood livability are continuing with the Department’s development of a comprehensive Livability Code being designed to address gaps in current City codes. The new Livability Code is on track for City Council review before the end of 2015.

Community Development Boards & Commissions

Board of Appeals

Hears appeals of decisions made by building official on construction-related issues and on rental housing standards code.

Downtown Advisory Board

Provides policy guidance and recommendations to the City Council in the following areas: Implementation of community plans for the downtown area; public infrastructure activities; redevelopment efforts; land use matters; and public parking policies and projects.

Historic Resources Commission

Conducts public hearings and takes action on Historic Preservation Permit applications; coordinates Historic Preservation outreach and education activities.

Housing and Community Development Advisory Board

Recommends policies on housing and community revitalization, affordable housing.

Planning Commission

Conducts public hearings and takes action on land development proposals, makes recommendations regarding the Comprehensive Plan, Land Development Code, and other land use plans.

Meeting dates, times and location are listed on the City’s Web calendar at <http://www.corvallisoregon.gov/index.aspx>. To confirm any meeting, call the Community Development Department at 541-766-6981.

Administration

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Carl Metz, Associate Planner

Jason Yaich, Senior Planner

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Chrissy Bevans, Sr. Administrative Specialist

Permit & Plan Review Services

Kevin Russell, Project Manager

Tenille Holroyd, Permit Coordinator

Paul Wolterman, Project Coordinator II

Cheryl Flick, Permit Technician II

Becky Peterson, Permit Technician I

Ashley Smith, Permit Technician

Johnathan Balkema, Project Coordinator II

Mike O’Connor, Project Coordinator II

Jared Voice, Senior Planner

Christian Shope, Assistant Planner

Shannen Lewis, Land Use Inspector

Lisa Franklin, Civil Engineer I

Kham Slater, Engineering Technician III

Inspection Services

24-Hour Inspection Request Line: 541-766-6745

Greg Hall, Specialty Inspection Supervisor

John Corliss, Building Inspector II

Pavel Anfilofieff, Building Inspector II

Jeff Domrude, Building Inspector II

David Hensley, Plumbing Inspector

Frank DeWilde, Electrical Inspector

Donald Meier, Electrical Inspector

Rob Larsen, Building Safety Inspector

Corvallis Planning-related On-line Services

Community Development Department.....	www.corvallisoregon.gov/cd
Planning Division Home Page	www.corvallisoregon.gov/cd-planning
Archived Documents.....	http://archive.corvallisoregon.gov
Building Permit Info	www.corvallispermits.com
Comprehensive Plan.....	www.corvallisoregon.gov/cd-complan
Current Land Use Staff Reports.....	www.corvallisoregon.gov/cd-staffreports
Historic Preservation Information	www.corvallisoregon.gov/cd-historic
Interactive Maps & GIS	www.corvallisismaps.com
Published Maps & Documents	www.corvallisoregon.gov/cd-publications
Zoning—Land Development Code	www.corvallisoregon.gov/cd-zoning